jury to internal finishings of houses so set up, and the meanness and annoyance of such unsoundness pervading a man's house, and the whole metropolis, one would suppose, afford sufficient reasons for the non-repeating of such a nuisance, but such seems not to be the case. Rather than acknowledge the defect, and return to proper geometrical construction, which costs nothing at first, and saves much ultimate expense, crisp cements are resorted to, which increase the expense, and only change sham arches into bad brick lintels, which fracture with the slightest jar or settlement.

But though, again, some of little experience may say, seeing this serious evil, "then let each aperture be covered *with stone;*" to this we object as a rule, from such practice being, though costly, little to be depended upon. They greatly err who think a single piece of stone is proper for the covering of ordinary apertures in buildings.

Unless a stone used for the covering of an aperture be compressed in all its particles, it must be dissipated by the superincumbent weight; the pressing gravity must extend its particles; if a stone be not compressed, it must fracture, even by its own weight, so soon as the gravity is greater than its cohesive strength. This is found in modern practice to have occurred to a lamentable extent—an extent to which ordinary persons, who are no great observers, have not the slightest idea—buildings cheap and buildings dear have alike suffered from the almost universal fracturing which has taken place in buildings where dependence has been placed upon lintels of stone. The stone lintels of the windows of St. Mark's Church, Pentonville, are all broken; of those at the church in Bryanston-square, about three-fourths are broken; those of Westminster Hospital are nearly all broken; and in the most costly city company's modern hall, where no expense of foundation, or cubic strength of stone, has been grudged, there is no lack of similar fracture. Were a Parliamentary commcommission to be instituted for inquiry upon the subject, two things would create astonishment—one, the prodigious extent of this *consumption-plague* in modern buildings, public and private; and the other, the strange laying aside of plain practical science, which has led to this insane laxity.

We may then be asked, how is this? what is its cause? where is the reason for it? The simple answer is, THE LOSS OF THE FREEMASONIC SECRET: in that secret lies the art of building soundly and economically; that secret is brought into use in genuine buildings of genuine Pointed Architecture, throughout a fabric, from its foundation to its top-stone, from its roof-summit to its base; the shrewd art of masonic compression, the causing every stone to press or gravitate to its neighbours, the keeping all tight, the cementing every thing by gravity—that sublime art which raised the thin sound fabrics of the middle ages, and keeps them firm, though very many of them are of mean, perishable materials, from the outsides of which time has pared away four inches of their subtle substance, and is still paring away more, while they stand defiant—that great secret, the knowledge of architectural dynamics—taught the mechanic the weight and position of every boss, abutment, pinnacle, flying-buttress, and other member of those time-defying erections.

We shall go no more at present into this part of the subject, but throw out boldly the requisite caution; only adding, lintels of stone, if weak, break by their own weight; if strong, by the slightest motion at the foundation: lintels of wood, and all wooden breast-summers, cause by their shrinkage and compression fracture of the work above them. If any of these things be arched above, so as wholly to prevent subsidence and fracture of the superincumbent walling, the work is twice done, and all the expense and weight of the lintel-work, and other trumpery, had better be saved; for, indeed, a very small portion of wood is indispensable for fixing the absolutely requisite combustible finishings.

Building is not genuine unless it contain in its outward ornamental form the undisguised constructive principle. Pointed Architecture is purely so throughout—all architectural masking is extravagantly expensive, for the ornament of it bears nothing, and the substance has to be increased to bear not only itself, and to perform its abstract purpose, but also to bear all the added trumpery; therefore, in many cases, a double expense of materials, and more, is incurred. Pointed Architecture bears in itself the seeds of its own preservation.

The next great defect in ordinary house-building, which is left to correct itself, while there has been in the Bill a broaching of much unwholesome, petty interference with matters of form and good construction, which are the subject's, the architect's and the builder's inherent birthright,—the next crying evil, which completes the ruin of a very considerable portion of household architecture, and which is not in the slightest degree discountenanced by the present Bill, is that notorious abomination the V roof.

The ruin which the groaning instability of place-bricks, and the failure of breast-summers, false arches, and quartered partitions has begun, this completes.

Tenants, under ordinary leases, agree to uphold, support, and maintain such fabrics; such a roof, being like an open book, is, as long as it exists, attempting to fall flat; the two covers, instead of downwardly compressing the wall, make war laterally upon it. If two such roofs come together on opposite sides of a wall, they neutralize each other's improper effect, if equal; but if unequal, their difference of weight forms a destructive moving power. If such a roof, as in the case of a corner house, have no counter-abutment, the wall is most assuredly thrust over; the tenant, therefore, cannot uphold, though he has agreed to do it, such a wall: he may rebuild it, he may pay for it as a dilapidation, but he has, injuriously to himself, undertaken an impossibility. Again, such a roof has nearly all its weight thrown, not upon the walls which are capable of bearing it, but upon void, using the thing called a GUTTER-PLATE. Now, to make this sufficiently strong to perform its duty unflinchingly, it should be of enormous dimension; and even then, if of timber, it would shrink, compress, and sag, and so still derange the whole roof. Though the tenant has agreed to support the fabric, this he cannot do; the gutter-plate, with all its superincumbent weight of roof, bends prodigiously; it is generally in imagination supported by the quartered partitions of the house, but these are all deranged by the gravitation of the wretched roof-work, communicated by the gutter-plate to every part of the interior of the house: every floor gives way like a sheet; not a chair, a table, a chest of drawers, a bookcase, a wardrobe, or a bedstead, will stand upright, but hangs forward; every household vessel is defrauded of a portion of its available capacity, for tilted on one side, the contained liquid meets its brim while part of its intended measure is still vacant; gravy runs over one side of every dish and plate, and stains the table-cloth and furniture.

The tenant has agreed to maintain the house by and with all and all manner of needful and necessary reparations, cleansings, a amendments whatsoever; but in vain does have repairs done, in vain does he have doo and windows eased and rehung; gravitatio constantly going on, as soon as the evil remedied, it is renewed. In vain are ce ings repaired; they crack again as so as mended: in vain is plastering cleanse the gutter, following the sinking of t gutter-plate, often breaks by the derang ment; the rain-water often, by this sinking, l there stagnant, so that a few drops mo make it overflow: thus, though he h been tired out by the frequent whitn of the ceilings, and the renewal of pape hanging which has been destroyed, too, by t same radical defect, he still has, at the e of his tenure, to pay for dilapidations, on a count of fancied neglects, and the fanci breach of a covenant which it is impossible keep fulfilled: and often the tenant has to rene the chief timbers of a house which have b come rotten through the running in of wat from the deranged gutter. For these reason we advise all our friends to abstain fro taking upon a repairing lease any house whi has such a roof, and we advise that the Buil ing-Act contain a clause forbidding the f mation of any such roof, except cases of strict necessity, and then only und the special allowance of the official-referee and we recommend that all tenants should excused from every repair consequent up them.

The pretence, when these execrable and d structive roofs are formed, is, that they are ec nomical, which is entirely false. Their fi saving is one gutter, but against this is to be the extra cost of the gutter-plates, and the gre increase in the height of the walling; th seldom save much at first—often nothing— the end occasion a triple expense—besid breaking and spoiling every ceiling and co nice, setting every flooring out of level, d ranging every door and window, and putting o of adjustment almost every piece of furnitur

D.

BUILDERS' SOCIETY.

Report upon the Metropolitan Buildings' B as printed by order of the House of Commo 17th May, 1844.

In presenting to you a further report up the Metropolitan Buildings' Bill, as n printed, in the form in which it is to be sent committee in Parliament, your committee req to notice that there is still about it too much the minute detail to which they adverted their last report, as characteristic rather of t specification of a particular work, than of t large and general provision which ought distinguish a legislative enactment.

The tendency of this must necessarily be occasion much present annoyance by int ference with small and unimportant matte and to throw great, if not insurmountable o stacles in the way of those improvements construction and manufacture, which the te per and opportunities of the age are genera adapted to foster and bring out.

For the more clear exposition of these vie this report will first point out the vari alterations which have been made in this l print of the Bill, and which appear to be objectionable, including those in which the commendation of our last report appears to h been attended to; and then place togeth in the order in which they stand in the B itself, those several matters which still app objectionable, or to require modificatio whether as the result of more mature co sideration of the proposed enactments as th appeared in the former print, or arising fr alterations now for the first time introduced

Several small verbal alterations have b made, the effects of which are to render t parts in which they occur more definite, b as they do not affect the provisions of t clauses themselves, it is not thought necess to point them out. There are, however, so new features, so important in their charac as to require specific notice.

No dwelling-houses are to be subject special supervision.

The powers of all Commissioners of Sew are to be saved.

Gas-works are not to come under the o rations of the Act as noxious trades.

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